THE FOURTH

OSLER MEMORIAL ORATION

1938

THE CANADIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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OSLER MEMORIAL ORATION

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Francis J. Shepherd, The Osler Oration, *Canad. M. Ass. J.*, 1929, **21:** 129.

Francis R. Packard, William Osler: The Men and Institutions with which he was Associated in Philadelphia, *Canad. M. Ass. J.*, 1932, **27:** 117.

Lewellys F. Barker, Osler in America; With Especial Reference to his Baltimore Period, *Canad. M. Ass. J.*, 1935, **33:** 353.

SIR WILLIAM OSLER, BT., M.D., F.R.S.*

I.—THE LAST PHASE (1905-19)
II.—HIS INFLUENCE ON MEDICINE AS A WHOLE

BY SIR HUMPHRY ROLLESTON, BT., G.C.V.O., K.C.B., M.D.

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A GREAT company of Osler's friends and pupils, particularly Harvey Cushing, Mrs. Gittings Reid, W. S. Thayer, Thomas McCrae, Maude Abbott, and Archibald Malloch, have paid eloquent tributes which will give to generations yet to come some impression of a wonderful personality with high ideals. Many felt, though they may not have expressed the comforting conviction, that he was their own particular friend to whom in the event of dire misfortune they could confidently turn for sympathetic advice and even for material help. How many put this to the test and were not disappointed will never be known.

There is a widespread idea that it is very rare for one man to excel in more than one direction, and some who knew him may have been inclined to rank the man above his numerous services to the science of medicine, medical education and preventive medicine. But in Maude Abbott's Osler Memorial Number of the *International Association of Medical Museums Bulletin* (No. IX, 1926) there is a bibliography of three hundred and fifty items of writings about Osler, which testify not only to their affection but also to his numerous facets. Many who thought that they knew him well were surprised to find from Cushing's *Life* how much more there was to tell. In him there was such an unusual combination of the qualities of heart and brain that, as W. S. Thayer (1864-1932) said, though others may have been as wise, learned, witty, kind, honest, and a few only as simple, he was unlike anyone else. Pomposity, a defensive mechanism of superior seniority, had no place in his make-up.

*The Fourth Osler Oration, delivered at the Sixty-ninth Annual Meeting of the Canadian Medical Association, Halifax, June 22, 1938.

I.

The last phase, the years 1905-19, of Osler's constant activities, became even more far-reaching than before, as is borne out by Harvey Cushing's wonderful *Life* which devoted the whole of the second volume to this period. From Oxford, now perhaps justly regarded as a learned annex of London, and less reverently nicknamed "the Latin quarter of Cowley" (Morris's motor works having industrialized the University city), his interests and influence radiated in all directions. This may partly explain why, as he mentioned in the introduction to the *Bibliotheca Osleriana*, his literary output in 1905-15 was not comparable to that in 1895-1905.

When appointed on August 4, 1904, to the Regius chair, just before he was sailing for America, Osler was in his 56th year, or practically the same age as his brother Regius, Clifford Allbutt (1836-1925) when on February 21, 1892, he succeeded Sir George Paget (1809-92) at Cambridge. The following letter, written after his return to America, expresses his attitude as regards his acceptance:—

Pointe-à-Pic
. . . 4th.

I was sorry not to have seen you again before leaving to talk over the Oxford affair. I did not get Balfour's letter until the evening before sailing. I hope to bear transplanting. 'Tis an experiment, all the same, and it will be interesting to see how it turns out. I am leaving what will be, with our new building, the best equipped clinic in the English-speaking world; but the work has told heavily on me for the past few years. If I could have kept the public away the duties of the hospital are easy enough, but for weeks I am hunted without even a

Sunday to myself and I do not think I could stand the pressure much longer. I had intended to quit at sixty, in any case, and this move will only cut off four years from my active clinical life. I have an immense amount of good material to "work up" for which the leisure of the next few years will be most acceptable. Fortunately Mrs. Osler is strongly in favour of the move. Thanks for the suggestion about Headington Hall. We shall come over in May and look about before deciding. It may be best to take a furnished house for a couple of months. McCrae told you of our proposed "System". I hope you will be able to give us something. On what would you care to write? Thanks for your suggestion to McCrae who has just been here for a few days.

Sincerely yours,

Sir John Scott Burdon-Sanderson (1828-1905) had been Jodrell Professor of Physiology at University College, London (1874-82), and the first Waynflete Professor of Physiology (1882-95) at Oxford before he was appointed Regius Professor of Medicine in 1895, in succession to Sir Henry W. Acland (1815-1900) who had held the chair since 1857. As Regius Professor Burdon-Sanderson was chiefly active, with the assistance in the practical work of James Ritchie (1864-1923), in lecturing on pathology which he insisted must rest on an accurate physiological basis. Osler was the first Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford to be appointed from outside and with such an extensive clinical experience, just as Clifford Allbutt was at Cambridge; in both the old universities the previous Regius professors had been local physicians. After Burdon-Sanderson's resignation an impasse arose and was only satisfactorily settled by Osler's acceptance of the chair. Burdon-Sanderson, his nephew J. S. Haldane (1860-1936), Francis Gotch (1853-1913), Waynflete Professor of Physiology, and Arthur Thomson (1858-1935), Professor of Anatomy, were anxious that Ritchie, originally an Edinburgh graduate and in general practice in Oxford, who had been Reader in Pathology since 1901 and Lecturer before that, should be Regius Professor. They argued that as the only duty of the Regius professor was to lecture, and as Oxford was not a complete medical school, *i.e.*, did not include clinical work, the Regius professor might appropriately lecture on pathology. They at once took steps to petition the Crown, in whom the appointment is vested, to put this into effect. But the Oxford medical graduates in London, at a meeting on January 5, 1904, at the Royal College of Physicians, protested that the professor should be "a physician representative of medicine in its widest sense", and preferably an Oxford man. A circular in these terms was signed by 134 Oxford men, and the following seemed to be eminently suitable: Sir William Church (1837-1928), J. F. Payne (1840-1910), (Sir) J. S. Sharkey (1847-1929), and T. D. Acland (1815-1900), the last three being St. Thomas's Hospital physicians, W. P. Herringham (1855-1936) then senior assistant physician to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and G. I. Schorstein (1866-1906), physician to the London Hospital. Sir William Church, then president of the Royal College of Physicians of London, and (Sir) John Rose Bradford (1863-1935), subsequently president of the College (1926-31), declined nomination, and of the other possibles (Sir) Wilmot Herringham was perhaps generally thought to be the most probable. The medical authorities at Oxford, however, did not give way, and indeed held a meeting in London to state their case. The chair then remained unfilled until Osler was appointed. It is doubtful who first suggested Osler's name for the chair, but it may have been Sir William Broadbent (1835-1907), who had been instrumental in persuading Clifford Allbutt in 1892 to accept the corresponding chair at Cambridge. Ritchie was given the title of Professor of Pathology on June 20, 1905, very soon after Osler's arrival in Oxford, but in 1907 he returned to Edinburgh as superintendent of the laboratory of the Royal College of Physicians.

In 1904 Osler came to England, as he had so often done before, for a summer holiday, and in his stride, so to speak, attended the meeting of the British Medical Association. That year it was at Oxford, previous meetings having been held there in 1835, 1852, and 1868. Just before the Oxford meeting he saw Sir John Burdon-Sanderson who had retired from the Regius chair in December, 1903, on account of ill health. After the chair had been empty for nearly six months Burdon-Sanderson had written on June 8th to Osler asking him to accept nomination as Regius professor. On Sunday, July 24th, when in London and at supper, together with Harvey Cushing, Thomas McCrae and others, he said quietly "Do you think that I am sufficiently senile to be Regius Professor at Oxford?" This was taken quite seriously and wrongly as a refusal by one of those present, who emphatically denied the possibility when on August 17th he was informed of Osler's acceptance.

On their arrival in Oxford on May 27, 1905, the Oslers first occupied No. 7 Norham Gardens which they rented from the widow of F. Max Müller (1823-1900), Professor of Comparative Philology (1868-1900) and author of many works, including *Chips from a German Workshop* (1867-

75). This house, built by Goldwin Smith (1823-1910), Regius Professor of Modern History (1858-66), stood for years alone in the country, but has long been engulfed in modern Oxford. Goldwin Smith left Oxford to become the first professor of English and constitutional history (1868-71) at the then new Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, and then retired to Toronto where I saw my father's old friend in 1907. The house in Norham Gardens thus had the distinction of being connected with two professorial exchanges between North America and Oxford. A year later the Oslers bought No. 13 Norham Gardens, which they enlarged and in which they both died. Osler left the house in perpetuity to his successors in the chair, but so far it has not been occupied by them. Just as the Johns Hopkins Hospital and No. 1 West Franklin Street, Baltimore—Osler's longest professorial phase—had been a medical Mecca, so Norham Gardens became a homing refuge of inspiration, welcome, and rest to which American, Canadian, and other pilgrim-physicians in Europe constantly found their way; and so, in what an Oxford undergraduate described as the "Open Arms", the "Rhodesian Mother", as Osler sometimes called his wife, and he dispensed gracious and boundless hospitality. Among the Oslers' numerous hospitalities was the regularly recurring entertainment of the external examiners for medical degrees held at Oxford. A photograph of the examiners for the final Bachelor of Medicine in 1913 was just going to be taken when Sir Edwin Ray Lankester and Sir E. B. Poulton came in sight and were at once hailed along by Osler so that they appear to be guarding or perhaps "inspecting" the examiners.*

On their arrival the Oslers were at once plunged into all kinds of activities—social, professorial and professional. Among them were the sittings for Sargent's well known group of the four chiefs of the Johns Hopkins Hospital—Osler, Welch, Halsted, and Howard Kelly. As in America, Osler was an extremely "clubbable" companion, and became a member of several London clubs of ancient and interesting lineage, and was

E. B. POULTON E. RAY LANKESTER

C. J. SYMONDS, G. HEATON, H. D. R., W. OSLER, T. D. ACLAND, F. W. N. HAULTAIN, H. R. ANDREWS.
Oxford, June 20, 1913.

*This photograph has not as far as I know been previously reproduced. It contains the examiners for the final examination for the degree of Bachelor of Medicine, namely,

Surgery: Sir Charters Symonds, a native of Saint John, New Brunswick, and George Heaton, of Birmingham, both dead.
Obstetrics: Haultain of Edinburgh, dead, and Russell Andrews of the London Hospital, retired.
Medicine: Acland of St. Thomas's Hospital, dead, and myself.

remarkably constant in his attendances. At Oxford he was extremely active at the Radcliffe Infirmary where he gave ward demonstrations not only to students but also to practitioners, was successful in obtaining a new clinical laboratory and in establishing a tuberculosis clinic. Under his influence the Oxford medical school became a living force, and the Oxford medical graduates in London and elsewhere were kept in touch with their alma mater.

The Regius chair carried with it official appointments particularly welcome to Osler; the Mastership of the five centuries old alms-house at Ewelme, fourteen miles from Oxford, attracted him by its thirteen old men and the ancient but neglected documents which he discovered and took steps to preserve. He often motored over and showed this picturesque refuge for the old to his friends, and cheered up the almsmen by attention and tobacco. The church there now appropriately contains a memorial tablet to Osler and his family. Another appendage of the Regius chair was a curatorship of the Bodleian (University) library, which made him free to wander where he would; but as usual he gave more than he received. He played a notable part in the recovery of a unique first folio of Shakespeare (1623) which the library had originally owned but had in 1663 disposed of with other "superfluous" books for £24, thus necessitating an expenditure of £3000 in 1906. When he became a delegate of the Clarendon (University) Press in 1905 its output of medical books was "insignificant in number, but in 1920 the Press stood in the front rank of medical publishers both at home and in America"; this the delegates in February, 1920, ascribed as due "in great part to Sir William Osler's initiative and supervision and to his unique influence in the medical world".

For his first three years at Oxford he was a member of that august body, the Hebdomadal Council, which, like the Council of the Senate at Cambridge, governs the University and at an earlier period had veiled its proceedings in Latin as the compulsory medium for exchange of views.

Osler's open friendliness soon won him a general welcome, though some criticism of one so unaccustomed to the academic life of an ancient university was almost inevitable. Fond of both the old and the young, he may, in order to bring them together, have modified the formal order of university precedence, by sending in to dinner the wife of the Vice-Chancellor with a Rhodes scholar and the Vice-Chancellor with a girl from one of the women's colleges. The following incident was told by himself: In June, 1907, Rudyard Kipling, one of his many friends, was given an honorary D.Litt. at the Encænia; before this, the wife of a don said to Osler at dinner "Who is this Rudyard Kipling who is going to be given an honorary degree?" To this he responded "Oh, don't you know, he's the chap who wrote *In Memoriam*", and met with the cold and superior correction, "No, that was Lord Tennyson".

His creation of Egerton Yorrick Davis, father, son, and grandson, used as a pseudonym when writing *jeux d'esprit* and when he wanted to pass unknown during a holiday, dates from the eighties when in Montreal. It has been compared by Cushing to McConnachie (1922), the fanciful half of Barrie, who resuscitated him in his posthumous *The Greenwood Hat* under the name of "James Anon".

The Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London celebrated its Centenary in 1905, and soon afterwards steps were taken to unite together into a kind of Academy of Medicine the various medical societies in London. An unsuccessful attempt to bring this about had been made in 1893 by its Secretary and Chief Librarian (Sir) J. Y. W. MacAlister (1856-1925), whose renewed suggestion in 1905 did not receive any encouragement until Osler, as shown in Cushing's *Life*, came to MacAlister's support. Thus, like the phœnix, the Royal Society of Medicine came into being by the amalgamation of seventeen medical societies with the Royal Medical and Chirurgical. At first there were thirteen separate sections, each with its own officers as in the pre-existing societies; now there are twenty-three such sections. At the first general meeting of the fellows of the new society on June 14, 1907, Osler seconded the election of Sir William Church as the first president, and described him as "that rare bird in the medical profession, a good business man". To the new society Osler rendered numerous services, many hidden from the general eye, and, though on two occasions he avoided the presidency of the whole society, he was president of two sections: the first president of the History of Medicine Section (1912-14) which really owed its birth, for it had been proposed but opposed on several occasions before, to Osler's influence. He was

also and nearly at the same time (1911-13) president of the Clinical Section.

The Quarterly Journal of Medicine and the Association of Physicians of Great Britain and Ireland came into existence in 1907 largely as the result of Osler's help. The history of these two enterprises is rather unusual as the first idea was for a journal only which would be prepared to publish in full articles containing the results of medical research. In the late nineties (Sir) A. E. Garrod (1857-1936), his friend (Sir) W. Hale White, and A. A. Kanthack (1863-98) were anxious to start such a journal, but after Kanthack's death any step in this direction was delayed until 1904, when Garrod sounded Osler, who gave the proposal his support. In 1906 Garrod, Hale White, Herringham, Rose Bradford, Robert Hutchison, and Rolleston met Osler who suggested that the Clarendon Press should publish the *Journal*. Further, being a great believer in the educational and harmonizing influence of medical societies, he proposed the formation of an Association of British Physicians on the lines of the Association of American Physicians founded in 1886. The Association of Physicians of Great Britain and Ireland was thus born at the same time as the *Quarterly Journal of Medicine*. Osler and the others, sometimes spoken of as "the gang", then approached the President of the Royal College of Physicians of London, Sir Richard Douglas Powell (1842-1925), the Regius Professors of Cambridge, Clifford Allbutt, and of Dublin, James Little (1837-1916), and the Professor of Medicine in Edinburgh, John Wyllie (1844-1916) who, after consultation with their colleagues, approved the proposals. The gang then worked out the rules, arrangements, and offices of the Association, Douglas Powell being the first president, Herringham the general secretary (1907-20), and Hale White the treasurer (1907-26). The first meeting of the Association was held in London on May 23-24, 1907, when the proposals as regards the Association and the *Quarterly Journal of Medicine* were approved. The gang, without Herringham, who had plenty to do in organizing the Association, formed the editorial board of the *Quarterly Journal of Medicine*, with Osler as senior editor until his death. A. G. Gibson, of Oxford, as secretary, held office until 1937, when the editors showed their appreciation by presenting him with a clock inscribed "1907-1937". A more detailed historical account of these events was given in the *Quarterly Journal of Medicine* (1936, N.S. V. 536-8); it is anonymous, but the absence of Gibson's name from the record is suggestive.

Although the acceptance of the Regius chair was intended to be a relief from overwhelming pressure, it showed little diminution, rather an expansion, of public activity. The number of lectures and addresses indeed increased: at the Royal College of Physicians he delivered the Harveian Oration (1906), "The Growth of Truth, as illustrated in the Discovery of the Circulation of the Blood", and the Lumleian Lectures (1910) on angina pectoris. At St. John's College, Cambridge, he gave the Linacre Lecture (1908), and, as the first lecturer on a new arrangement of an endowment founded in 1524, gave an account of the Founder, Thomas Linacre (1460-1524). On May 16, 1919, as president of the Classical Association, an office never before held by a practising physician, he illuminated "The Old Humanities and the New Science", to which he devoted more time and thought than to any of his numerous addresses; there are four drafts of it in the Osler Library at McGill. In spite of his modest disclaimer of even the traditional "small Latin and less Greek" he was well qualified, especially by the preparation of the *Bibliotheca Osleriana* — a bio-bibliographical catalogue raisonné of his library over which he had spent any spare time he had had during the previous five years. It was partly based on the *Bibliotheca Universalis* (1545) of Conrad Gesner, "the father of bibliography", and on the *Bibliotheca Chemica* (1906) of John Ferguson (1837-1916), Professor of Chemistry at Glasgow. It was successfully completed and published in 1929 as the result of the devotion of his cousin W. W. Francis with the collaboration of R. H. Hill, of the Bodleian at Oxford, and Archibald Malloch, now librarian of the New York Academy of Medicine. His unfinished introduction is an autobiography of a book-lover. Many other addresses were given by him to medical and literary societies, of which mention may be made of his contributions to the Bibliographical Society, of which he was president from 1913 through the war years.

The winter of 1908-9 was a sabbatical half year spent in France and Italy, mainly in Paris and Rome, with much work in libraries and purchases of books, many being given to others.

The coronation honours of King George V. in June, 1911, contained the name of Osler, with those of Butlin and Goodhart, of London, and Charles Ball and Thornley Stoker, of Dublin.

The *British Medical Journal* in recording these baronetcies referred to Osler as one who "in spite of some temptations to belong to other nations has been proud to remain a British subject" and "has a very warm place in our hearts and a very high place in our esteem". In 1918 there were rumours that he was to be raised to the peerage, but to a friend who mentioned them Osler expressed quite definitely his disinclination.

At the seventeenth and last International Congress of Medicine in London in 1913 under the presidency of Sir Thomas Barlow (1845-), then president of the Royal College of Physicians, Osler was president of the Section of Medicine, and was supported by eleven vice-presidents, mainly professors of medicine in British universities, and served by seven secretaries of whom his successor at Oxford, A. E. Garrod, is the only one who has followed him beyond these voices. The Oslers transformed Brown's Hotel into a London "Open Arms", and Osler gave a presidential dinner at the Royal Automobile Club to 196 members of his section.

Until the outbreak of war on August 4, 1914, which abruptly brought to a close the period (1871-1914) recently described as "a golden age of Europe", the Oslers had thoroughly enjoyed their Oxford experience; but in common with everyone this catastrophe began a new chapter in their lives. Active in many new directions, especially for the wounded, the Oslers suffered the tragedies of losses among their friends and the constant and growing anxiety about what might befall their only son, a correct premonition of which Osler seems to have had from the first. That he was prepared for any change of fickle fortune is shown by one of his ideals expressed in his parting words at the farewell dinner on May 2, 1905, in New York: "To be ready when the day of sorrow and grief came to meet it with the courage befitting a man". This blow he bore with supreme courage, but those who knew him best saw what even he could not hide.

During the war he was spoken of as "the consoler-general" of the British Army, for he was constantly seeing wounded and invalided soldiers, especially Americans and Canadians, in all parts of the country, or making inquiries about them and otherwise helping their relatives. Much of his time was devoted to visiting hospitals, and together with Clifford Allbutt and James Mackenzie (1853-1925) he was an active consultant to the Heart Hospital for Soldiers, first at Hampstead and then at Colchester. As a member of the Civilian Medical Board at the War Office he was much consulted by Sir Alfred Keogh, the Director-General of Army Medical Services. In addition he was appointed in 1916 a member of the Royal Commission on University Education in Wales. After the Armistice the process of reconstruction kept him busy in many directions, such as post-graduate courses for returning medical officers and the continuation of the work on the Royal Commission for University Education in Wales. The distress and food shortage in Vienna in the early part of 1919 excited his enthusiastic help and approach to the British Government.

On July 14, 1919, he was appointed an original member of the University Grants Committee on its inception. This committee advised the government about the claims of the universities in England, Scotland, and Wales for financial assistance. He at once became active, among other directions on the establishment of clinical units at teaching hospitals in London, and specially visited Edinburgh and Glasgow. In November, with premonition of the future, which he had from the early days of his fatal illness, he resigned. The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Austen Chamberlain) in accepting the resignation on November 10th wrote: "But I cannot do so without expressing my warm appreciation of the valuable help you have given to the government in the work of promoting university education as a member of the Advisory Committee to the Board of Education, and my great regret that you are prevented by ill health from continuing your services as a member of the new Committee". Osler's place was taken by Herringham, who held office until 1932.

On July 11, 1919, the day before his seventieth birthday, he was presented with two volumes of medical and biological contributions by 150 friends, and his brother Regius, Clifford Allbutt, was appropriately selected to express the affectionate regard of the subscribers. A committee, presided over by W. H. Welch, brought out the volumes of which 1,600 copies were printed; the labour of love of seeing the volumes through the press was undertaken by C. L. Dana (1852-1935).

The bronze memorial plaque, unveiled on June 10, 1925, is in the Oxford University Museum and is now close to those of Thomas Sydenham and Sir Henry Acland. Osler House is the official residence of the Director (Professor J. A.

Gunn) of the Nuffield Institute of Clinical Research, close to the Radcliffe Infirmary.

II.

In any attempt to estimate Osler's influence on medicine as a whole attention must be directed to the infinite variety of his services. His activities were not mainly confined, as were those of some other masters of medicine, to one particular field, such as laboratory research, clinical observation and bedside teaching, medical education, preventive medicine, or the scholarly aspects and history of medicine. He played a great part in all these directions, and in others, such as the promotion of medical societies and the hospitality to and recognition of deserving colleagues. He was an apostle of international medicine with an extraordinarily wide knowledge of the subject and its leaders, past and contemporary, and, what is more, had the kindliest feelings for them all; among the older, his "friends of the spirit", he had the warmest affection for Conrad Gesner (1516-65) and Sir Thomas Browne (1605-82). Describing himself as a peripatetic, he travelled widely and often deprecated chauvinism (narrow provincialism) in medicine, delighted in entertaining strangers within his gates, in Christ Church, Oxford, and at the Athenæum, and in making them known to his friends; he thus was a maker of medical ententes and exemplified to the full the ideal that medical science has no racial boundaries.

That he became widely known at a comparatively early age may be illustrated by an incident related by W. S. Thayer who attended the XIIth International Congress of Medicine in 1897 at Moscow, to which Osler did not go. On his way back through Middle Europe Thayer met Chiari (1851-1916) who inquired "How is your Osler? He must be centuries old". At the time of his death he was the greatest personality in the medical world. A striking proof of the vitality of the Osler tradition is shown by the articles every year telling "more about Osler", and by the number of Osler Clubs in North America and Great Britain, consisting largely of young men who never met him in the flesh. The "Osler Day" started in February, 1935, at Hamilton, Ontario, was the appropriate canonization of a medical saint, and had been foreshadowed, years before Osler left Baltimore, by Max Brödel's drawing of Osler—"The Saint—Johns Hopkins Hospital"—with wings and a halo directing a storm over the hospital, which was driving away disease.

In lay literature he appeared as Sir Richard Holter in E. S. Martin's "Abroad with Jane" (1914). Basil Gildersleeve, professor of Greek at Johns Hopkins University, addressed him in a sonnet (1919) as "William the Fowler, Guillaume l'Oiseleur", and Thayer in his "Medical Education of Jones" (1927) portrayed him as "Fowler".

After his farewell address on February 22, 1905, when he made in all innocence what he afterwards spoke of as his "rehashed Anthony Trollope joke of chloroform at 60", he mentioned that the new verb "to oslerize" had appeared in a popular dictionary. Though much concerned at the time of the mistaken stunt on the part of the reporters, in too great a hurry to find out what was really meant, his philosophy came to the rescue and he would have laughed at the *Pall Mall Gazette* of July 11, 1908, which celebrated his 59th birthday with a quotation from his address about "the fixed period" and the following verse ascribed to "one of his disciples":

> Brother, I am sixty-one,
> So my work on earth is done;
> Calm should follow after storm
> Reach me down the chloroform.

He was a professor for forty-four years in four universities; first at McGill, of the "Institutes of Medicine" (physiology, pathology, and therapeutics)—a relic of the Edinburgh tradition—thus acquiring a sound foundation for the thirty-five years as a clinical professor. He was preeminently an educator of the medical profession and their fellow student all his days. As professor of medicine at the Johns Hopkins University and physician-in-chief to the Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, which was an integral part of the University's medical school, a free hand was wisely given to Osler, and further an interval of seven years (1888-95) allowed complete organization to be effected before the undergraduate medical teaching in the wards began. He was thus enabled to build up the first organized medical clinic in Anglo-Saxon countries untrammelled by old traditions and free from vested interests. This smooth working, most efficient, and prolific team of workers soon made the Johns Hopkins University famous for scientific medical activity and as a training school for teachers in other medical centres in North America. From an extensive experience of medical schools in two continents Osler welded

together the best features of British teaching and of the German clinics—the individual bedside teaching of students, who as clinical clerks had free access to the wards and patients in a clinic under a director with highly trained assistants and laboratory equipment. The resulting combination of Osler and Welch has been compared to that of "Skoda and Rokitansky, Schönlein and Johannes Müller, Traube and Virchow, combinations representing the best of medical practice and medical sciences" (Canby Robinson). The introduction of bedside teaching as largely a substitute for the old didactic systematic lectures was one, perhaps the greatest, of the reforms which Osler initiated and became universal in North America. It played a very important part in the transformation of medical education in the United States from the state of affairs when it was most exceptional for students to have free entry to the wards, though in some medical schools they could obtain an M.D. degree after two or even one year's work. Osler indeed desired no epitaph other than that "he taught medical students in the wards". Another powerful factor in the success of the Johns Hopkins medical school was that applicants were obliged to possess the degree of bachelor of arts or science.

As a teacher his influence was much wider than, though not so vivid as, his personal contact, for his literary output was wonderfully extensive and covered half a century, from his first published paper, "Christmas and the Microscope" (1869), to his last review, published in 1920, of Stephen Paget's "Life of Victor Horsley". Altogether his contributions mounted up to more than a thousand, as shown in the bibliography (including, however, a number of anonymous articles) in Maude Abbott's Osler Memorial Number of the *Bulletin of the International Association of Medical Museums.* So wide are they that any writer, especially if with a new idea, observation, or historical subject, would be well advised to find out before publication what Osler may have said on the subject, unless indeed the intending author is too obedient to Kingston Fowler's epigram: "If you want to be original you must not read too much".

Osler's *Principles and Practice of Medicine* (1892), which reached a ninth edition in 1920, was translated into French, German, Spanish, and Chinese. On the recommendation of his lay adviser, F. T. Gates, who had read the textbook with the help of a medical dictionary, J. D. Rockefeller made his generous endowment of medical research and education, and of the prevention of disease throughout the world. Osler's textbook differed somewhat from existing works in the omission of introductory and general articles (prolegomena), such as those on the nature of disease, inflammation, and fever. The first edition somewhat surprised the reviewers by beginning with an account of typhoid fever.

The famous *Lectures on the Principles and Practice of Physic*, first published in 1843 by Sir Thomas Watson (1792-1862) had a long life, at least forty years, though in the early eighties it was probably read more for its style and wisdom than for the most recent views on the subject. *The Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Medicine* (1876) by J. S. Bristowe (1827-95) was a solid and laborious work, and was superseded by *The Principles and Practice of Medicine* (1886) by Hilton Fagge (1838-83), largely based on the experience of Guy's Hospital and with a sound foundation of morbid anatomy, which was brought out by P. H. Pye-Smith (1840-1914).

Osler's textbook resembled Hilton Fagge's book in many respects, but was particularly attractive for its concise character, personal touches, and intriguing allusions to personalities, ancient and modern, in illustration of symptoms and treatment. This appeal was shown by two examination papers on Osler's Medicine in *St. Thomas's Hospital Gazette* (1902, XII, 59; 1907, XVII, 195) on the lines of the examination paper on "The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club", set in 1857 by C. S. Calverley (1831-84), who awarded prizes to Walter Besant (1836-1901) and W. W. Skeat (1835-1912). The first question in this old example of *facetiæ* "Mention any occasions on which it is specified that the fat boy was *not* asleep" may not be devoid of modern endocrine interest. Osler was much tickled by the effusions from St. Thomas's Hospital, and said that he could answer all the questions in the papers, though he seemed a little doubtful, it would seem unnecessarily, if the answer to "What internal evidence is there that Osler has had an unhappy experience with cheap bicycles?" is to be found in the statement that "entire families sometimes show this tendency to early arteriosclerosis, which cannot be explained in any other way than that in the make-up of the machine bad material was used for the tubing".

Modern Medicine: its Theory and Practice. In original Contributions by American and Foreign authors, also entitled in the London reprint *A System of Medicine* (1907), edited by W. Osler and Thomas McCrae in seven volumes passed into a second edition in 1913. In addition his monographs on *The Cerebral Palsies of Children* (1889), on *Chorea and Choreiform Affections*

(1894), *Lectures on the Diagnosis of Abdominal Tumours* (1895), *Angina Pectoris and Allied States* (1897), and *Cancer of the Stomach* (1900), with T. McCrae, and syndromes, such as Vaquez-Osler disease, Banti's syndrome, multiple hereditary telangiectasis, and Osler's nodes in chronic infectious endocarditis, which he described or expanded, increased his wide reputation. An early and extremely valuable addition to hæmatology was the work, carried on with (Sir) E. A. Schäfer (1850-1935) at University College, London, in 1872-3 on blood-platelets, then recognized as a definite constituent of the blood. Later (1882), Osler emphasized their importance in thrombosis. *Sphyranura osleri*, a trematode worm found in the gills of a newt, and *Filaria osleri* (now *Oslerus osleri*) remain as evidence of the zoological activities in the decade 1870-80.

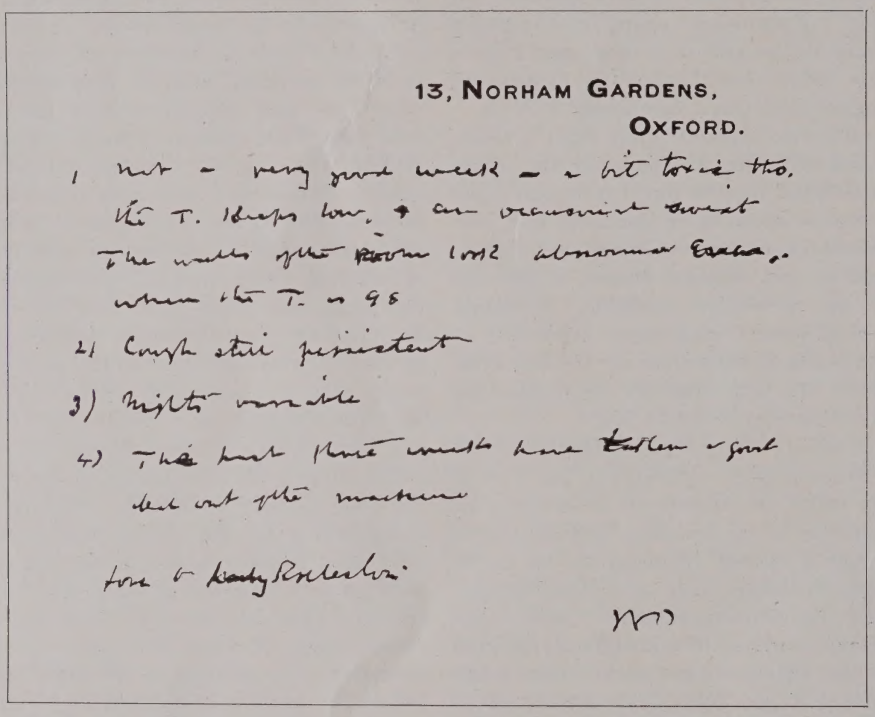
The studies on typhoid fever, eight articles, brought out with his assistants in the *Johns Hopkins Hospital Reports* forty years ago when typhoid was so common in America, had, like his numerous papers and addresses on tuberculosis, malaria, and venereal disease, a powerful influence on preventive medicine. A happy manner of persuasive enthusiasm fitted him to be a great leader in campaigns for the benefit of the nations. In fact whatever he touched he endowed with energetic active life.

Like his seniors Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809-94) and Weir Mitchell (1829-1914), for both of whom he wrote affectionate *in memoriams*, he was noteworthy as an American medical teacher who exerted a literary influence by his extra-professional writings, such as "Æquanimitas" (1904) and "An Alabama Student" (1908). His kindly humour carried him triumphantly through lay sermons which others might have made merely moral if not dull. It is interesting to speculate how successful authors develop their literary art; some have intentionally modelled themselves on the prose of John Milton, Joseph Addison, Oliver Goldsmith, or R. L. Stevenson. Osler's concise epigrammatic style, with but little use of the first person singular, according to Edward Gibbon "the most disgusting of pronouns", may well have been due to familiarity with the Authorized Version (1611) of the Bible, the Prayer Book, and Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici*, his constant companion—*comes viæ vitæque*—for fifty-two years. His pen was the equal of his heart.

Power of Work.—On October 1, 1903, Osler gave an address entitled "The Master-Word in Medicine" to medical students at the opening of the new buildings of the medical faculty of the University of Toronto. After an inspiring recital of what the work-habit had accomplished in the case of others, he added "He who addresses you has that honour directly in consequence of having had it engraved on his heart when he was as you are to-day". He had expressed this before. On June 16, 1899, he delivered the Cavendish lecture on cerebrospinal fever before the West London Medico-chirurgical Society; this was followed by what Cushing described as "more than usually flattering votes of thanks". In one of these the speaker being what is described in legal circles as "badly briefed" delivered himself thus: "While no doubt we all know his text-book on medicine, and the experimental work which has won recognition from his peers on both sides of the Atlantic, I doubt if we all know William Osler as the clinician". Osler replied quietly "Whatever I may have been enabled to do in my life has been accomplished by hard and persevering work". He had the enviable power of utilizing every moment, was master of his own time, and no one could hold him if he was busy, for he slipped away successfully without anyone knowing quite how he managed it. Like many hard and successful workers he did not burn the midnight oil. The amount of thought and time he gave to his addresses and articles can be judged by their numerous drafts now in the Osler Library at McGill. Working rapidly in extracting the gist out of papers, he had a very good memory which he supplemented by little pocket-books, one of which was constantly in use. Thus he collected much material for papers, many of which were never finished nor published, as is shown in the *Bibliotheca Osleriana* under the heading "Osleriana". A very wide reader, he did not waste time on modern thrillers.

With a large number of correspondents he did not rest content with the somewhat passive attitude of merely answering letters, though in his case this must have been a very considerable labour. Not a letter-writer of the old-fashioned, crossed-paged type, he often took the initiative and, like W. E. Gladstone, made great use of postcards. He often congratulated a young medical writer on a recently published paper, and volunteered help. Archibald Malloch remembers that one evening, after a day in London, forty-one letters and cards were dispatched. The last I had from him was about ten days before his death (Fig. 2).

Never a mere figure-head, he was the energetic moving spirit in many new projects and reforms, and when their future success was practically assured he would arrange that the leadership should be vested in someone in an eminent official position. It was as a genuine humanist that he was able to do so much in the prevention as well as in the scientific study of disease. He willingly accepted office for the good of a worthy cause: for example, after the Armistice, when demobilized American and Canadian medical men were passing through London, he became president of the Fellowship of Medicine. Absolutely devoid of selfish ambition, he skilfully, like the second Viscount Esher (1852-1930), who was said to have "possessed all the qualifications for success in public life except the conviction that it was worth while", escaped posts of distinction for which others strive. Thus, to mention a few of probably many instances, he declined, though much pressed to be a candidate for, the chair of medicine at Edinburgh in 1900, and a similar post at Manchester in 1907 in succession to Julius Dreschfeld (1846-1907), the chief inducement there being the wealth of clinical material; but he could hardly have considered this as seriously as he had the Edinburgh chair. He twice, in 1914 and 1918, declined to be nominated for the presidency of the Royal Society of Medicine in London, and in 1915 he wrote to a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of London: "I think the President of the College should be a man resident in London. I have had enough of these things and am not specially ambitious in this direction. To tell you the truth, I think the business would bore me to death. All the same, it is awfully good of some of the Fellows to think of me." Though so largely responsible for the Association of Physicians of Great Britain and Ireland, Osler was never the president of the Association, this office being an annual one and determined by the place of meeting.



13, NORHAM GARDENS,
OXFORD.

1 not a very good week — a bit touch and
the T. keeps low, & an occasional sweat
The walls of the room [illegible] abnormal Exacerbation.
when the T. is 98

2) Cough still persistent

3) Night sweats

4) The last phase must have taken a good
deal out of the machine

Love to Lady Osler

WO

An interest in medical history is usually an acquired taste and, though it may be regarded as evidence of an admirable catholicity, is somewhat rarely affected by those occupied in making present advances—the history of the future. Osler was an exception to common rules and certainly to any suggestion that devotion to medical history is a sign of senescence. Beginning in the Montreal period with unsigned biographies and obituaries Osler carried this on through the Philadelphia phase, to expand its

scope in the Johns Hopkins Historical Club, and to become his most congenial occupation in Oxford and Great Britain. He had in an extreme degree, as Thomas McCrae said, "the historical sense from the lack of which so many of us suffer and know it not".

It sometimes happens that a biographer's account of his subject may reveal his own ideals of a way of life; Osler's address on William Pepper (1843-98), written just forty years ago, is an example:—

> "There are two great types of leaders: one, the great reformer, the dreamer of dreams—with aspirations completely in the van of his generation—lives often in wrath and disputations, passes through fiery ordeals, is misunderstood, and too often despised and rejected by his generation. The other, a very different type, is the leader who sees ahead of his generation, but has the sense to walk and work in it. While not such a potent element in progress, he lives a happier life, and is more likely to see the fulfilment of his plans."

The second category in which he placed Pepper as "the most notable the profession of this country has offered to the world" was an unconscious but true forecast of his own epitaph, twenty-one years later. In this charming appreciation of his friend he paraphrased some lines of Matthew Arnold's poem *Rugby Chapel*, describing his father, and some other lines from this poem also apply to Osler, much as his methods differed from those of the serious and earnest Thomas Arnold:—

> O strong soul, by what shore
> Tarriest thou now? For that force,
> Surely, has not been left vain!
> Somewhere, surely, afar,
> In the sounding labour-house vast
> Of being, is practised that strength,
> Zealous, beneficent, firm.

Though a shrewd judge of character, neither his opinion about individuals nor the reasons for it, if unfavourable, were expressed unless there was some very good reason, and then it was done in a semi-humorous manner, such as a whimsical phrase "he is a son of Belial", or "Well, he had not the advantage of choosing his parents". Never was there any sting in his comments, and what he did not say on these occasions was often very significant of his charity to poor human nature. His philosophy was that of Marcus Aurelius, whose "To Himself" was included in his list of ten books for the bedside library of the medical student. As a result of his genius for friendship, private and public, the early and rapid success which his honest work brought did not raise any cloud of jealousy, the vice that gives no pleasure to anyone. It was rightly said in London that "No one could be jealous of Osler". Even pessimists in a critical world hardly ever spoke slightingly of him, and in Major Greenwood's words "It is impossible that he ever made an enemy of any normal man".

As his early intention had been to enter the church, it is not surprising that his influence was always directed to the promotion of "unity, peace and concord"; he adopted as his motto Leigh Hunt's line "Write me as one who loves his fellow-men". Just as there has been a change in the contacts of fathers and sons from that of "Sir" and servant to that of elder and younger brother, so Osler, though with every qualification to be regarded as a medical father, was always the same age as his companions, whether children or his seniors, and was accurately called "the beloved physician of two continents". Rapidly making acquaintances, extremely generous of time and money, he retained their friendship, and his wonderful example of kindly charity must have helped many to follow in his footsteps. He was the "doctors' doctor", and of the many affectionate epitaphs describing him one of the most appealing is that of his biographer—"the friend and companion for young or old".

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